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THE GARDEN CALENDAR.

A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, horticulturist, Bureau of Plant Industry, through WRC and 36 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, July 29, 1930.

Hello friends: I find it difficult to say anything very cheerful today in view of the weather conditions throughout the greater part of the eastern United States. It would seem that the different parts of the country are staging a contest to see which section can hold out the greater number of days without rainfall or report the highest average temperature. Incidentally, we have not been wearing overcoats or sleeping under blankets the past week or two here in Washington, and it gave me great satisfaction the other day to have Will Rogers admit that it has been really hot in California.

This surely is a trying time for all of us who have gardens and very little if any water available for irrigating our crops. A few sections have had fairly good rains, but other sections have been practically without rain for more than 60 days. In my rounds the past few days, I have been really surprised to note how well the gardens and orchards are holding up under the extreme drought and high temperatures. Reports are coming to us, however, from certain of the important fruit-growing sections to the effect that fruit trees are losing their foliage and the fruit developing abnormally. I observe that in many cases currants, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, and other small fruits are dying as a result of the drought. This may call for replanting this fall or next spring.

In one of my recent talks, I called attention to the importance of planting fall gardens. For my own part, I am waiting for a break in the weather, but have not given up the idea of planting a number of crops for fall use. It is reasonably certain that there will be a break in weather conditions in the near future, and my suggestion is that you go ahead making preparations for planting fall crops as soon as there is enough moisture in the soil.

At our house we are canning tomatoes and other garden products whenever we have more than we need for immediate use. In view of the way vegetable crops are drying up, I deem it advisable to go ahead and can or preserve all available surplus. With this in mind, I might call your attention to Farmers' Bulletin No. 1471 on "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home." A reprint of this bulletin has just been issued.

Shrubbery growing in borders and around the house foundations is dying in many places for want of water and some of it may need to be replaced. Those of you who contemplate any planting of this character, or the improvement of your places this fall, will do well to get a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1087 on "Beautifying the Farmstead." This bulletin has been reprinted in a very attractive form, and is especially valuable for its illustrations.

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While it will be several weeks before time to dig and store sweet potatoes, those of you who live in the southern portion of the country may be interested in securing a copy of our sweet potato bulletin which has just recently been reprinted, it is Farmers' Bulletin No. 999. While you are about it you should get a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1442 on the "Storage of Sweet Potatoes." This bulletin tells how to construct and operate a sweet potato storage house.

There is one more bulletin that I wish to mention today, it is entitled "Growing Fruit for Home Use." In my talk last week, I mentioned the importance of properly caring for fruit, both for home use and for marketing, but this bulletin which is Farmers' Bulletin No. 1001, gives some good pointers on how to grow good fruit that is worth taking care of.

In closing, I am going to suggest that you make the best of a bad weather situation by keeping your crops free from weeds, mulching trees and berries wherever you can obtain material with which to mulch them, and using a little spare water on some of the most prized ornamental plants in order to keep them alive. I find that a mulch of weeds or straw placed around a tree or about shrubbery has a wonderful effect in retaining moisture. This material not only prevents the evaporation of moisture from the soil, but it shades the soil from the direct rays of the sun. Half-rotted manure or shredded cornstalks are excellent for use as a mulch, but if you can't get anything else just weeds make a fair soil covering. Don't forget that growing weeds draw heavily upon the moisture supply of the soil so pull or hoe them out and spread them around your trees and shrubs or along the rows of raspberries and blackberries to serve as a mulch.

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